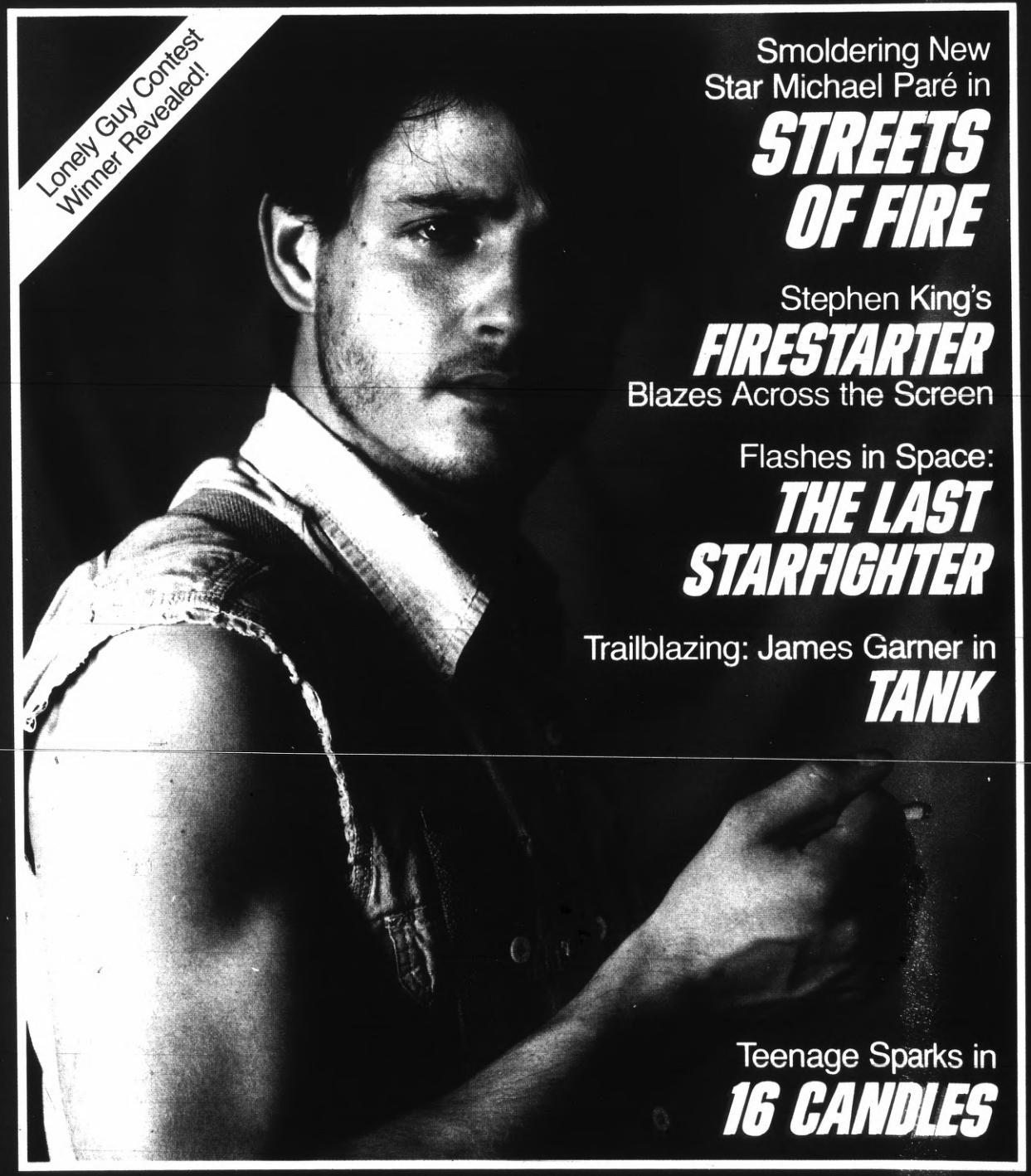
THE MOVIE MAGAZINE



Lonely Guy Contest Winner Revealed!

Smoldering New Star Michael Paré in

STREETS OF FIRE

Stephen King's

FIRESTARTER

Blazes Across the Screen

Flashes in Space:

THE LAST STARFIGHTER

Trailblazing: James Garner in

TANK

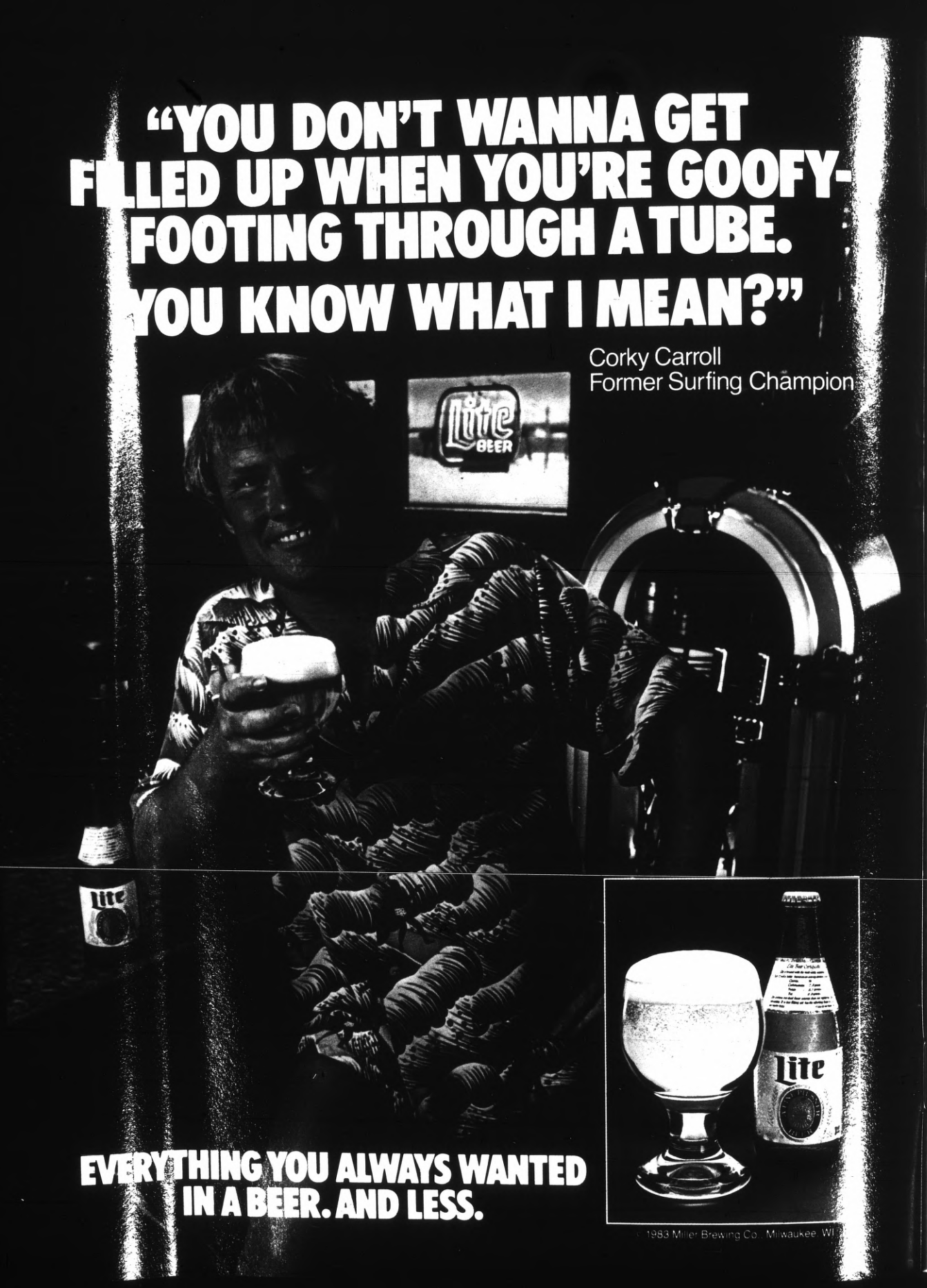
Teenage Sparks in

16 CANDLES

SPRING 1984 VOL. II, NO. 2

"YOU DON'T WANNA GET FILLED UP WHEN YOU'RE GOOFY-FOOTING THROUGH A TUBE. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?"

Corky Carroll
Former Surfing Champion



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THE MOVIE MAGAZINE

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OUR COVER
Michael Paré stars in Streets of Fire, *photographed by Stephen Vaughan/Sipa Press.*

Molly Ringwald (left) stars in **Sixteen Candles,** a gentle comedy from the writer of *National Lampoon's Vacation.* James Garner in **Tank** (right) is a mean army man with his own vintage World War II Sherman tank.

Flames engulf cars, houses, and people in **Firestarter** (below), from Stephen King's bestseller. Drew Barrymore is the girl with the fearsome fire power.

Lance Guest (below, with video game) stars as a young Earthling who finds himself enmeshed in an intergalactic struggle in **The Last Starfighter.**

Michael Paré, whose face launched a career — his own — stars as Tom Cody in the first of three Walter Hill epics, **Streets of Fire.**

The Lonely Guy Contest Winner!

We had hoped that all entries in our Lonely Guy Contest would be snide and silly, as was our contest entreaty, but after reading through every scrap of paper, it was obvious that some of you took us seriously."

Fortunately for our lives and our sanity, some of you *were* snide and silly. Our first place Lonely Guy is **Tony Razzini** of St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota, who wrote: "Yes, I am a lonely guy because I go to the computer room here at SCSU and listen to the girls moan when their computer programs don't work." For his eavesdropping loneliness, Mr. Razzini receives a trip to Los Angeles for one, a screening of *The Lonely Guy* (for one), and assorted other lonely prizes as detailed in our last issue.

In addition to our winner, we have two runners-up who deserve Dishonorable Mention — no prizes, just our gratitude. **Kevin Davis** of Kearney State, Nebraska, is a lonely guy because "whenever I go out with girls they always tell me they never kiss on the last date." **David Laing** of Milwaukee, Wisconsin complains that "I drive down one-way streets the wrong way just to get someone to wave at me."

We mourn for so many of you whose pet ferns died, and whose parents have forgotten your names. We thank every entrant, and we certainly hope that you all become a little less lonely in 1984.

LETTERS

In your Winter (83/84) issue you had an article on the upcoming movie *Iceman* (I'm always aware not to prejudge, but that title struck me as a winner). At any rate, the reason for my letter is article-writer Zan Stewart's remark "but there hasn't been a film which at once explores our future *and* our distant past."

Now, I'll admit that *2001: A Space Odyssey* must have been beyond many people, but what does Mr. Stewart think it was about? It explores human intelligence and man's destiny. What could draw history (pre-history and yet-to-come) closer together? Perhaps Ringo Starr in another caveman role?

I might suggest the books *2001: A Space Odyssey,* and its sequel, *2010: Odyssey Two,* both by Arthur C. Clarke; and especially *The Making of Kubrick's 2001,* edited by Jerome Agel, and *The Dragons of Eden* by Carl Sagan.

A reader
No address given

I was interested to read about *The Lonely Guy;* I'm one of the nine or ten people in this country who loved *Pennies from Heaven,* and I'm glad Steve Martin is still trying to do something besides *The Jerk.* Don't get me wrong, I liked *The Jerk* . . . but I like *I Love Lucy* reruns, too. Eclectic taste and all that. I wish him well — and your magazine, too. I just wish it came out more often.

Sally Johanssen
Urbana, IL

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DUNE

A fan club for the movie *Dune* is currently being formed somewhere in the arid sands of Hollywood. Those readers interested in joining, or receiving more information, should send name and address to:

DUNE FAN CLUB
Box 699
Hollywood, CA 90078

Details will be mailed as soon as they are available

THE LAST STARFIGHTER

Computer War Across the Universe

BY BYRON LAURSEN

A movie script is a recipe, a schedule of ingredients and proportions. If the pages are going to produce a feast, those ingredients have to be top choice and their preparation must be careful. In the case of *The Last Starfighter*, the chefs are so proud of their methodology they won't tell a soul about the close details of their cookery: *The Last Starfighter* is the most secretive production in Hollywood since the last *Star Wars* installment, at least.

"The computer graphics for this film have seven-and-a-half times greater resolution than has been seen before," says producer Gary Adelson. "Some of the special effects sequences were actually shot before any of the live action photography was begun. There's a full year of work on the special effects alone. That's about all I can tell you."

The Last Starfighter is concocted from an imaginative leap outward. An arcade-type outer space blast-the-attacking-aliens game becomes a training device for the "real" thing — good, old-fashioned good-vs-evil intergalactic warfare. Space armadas are laid waste. Alien blood washes starship interiors like Red Mountain Burgundy at a fraternity bash. Creatures, weird to the Nth degree, pitch high-tech tussles while the fates of galaxies hinge on the precision timing of fast-as-light, bogglingly destructive weapon blasts. In short, nothing like the Jane Austen novel you had to read in Survey of Eng. Lit.

Drawn into the struggle, unaware and even unwillingly, is an Earth boy from the boondocks. In the great tradition of epics and mythology, he overcomes his reluctance and grows into the role of hero. Initially he's shanghied into heroism by a magical trickster, an intergalactic con man. Then he decides, on his own under the press of battle, that life is worthless unless he chooses a path of honor. The story's threads can be traced back to all sorts of popular and classical works; those who have enjoyed such as *Lord of the Rings*, *Star Wars*, *The Niebelungenlied* and various Greek myths, not to mention American comic books, will sense some deep similarities in Jonathan Betuel's screenplay.

That's the recipe, in compressed form. The ingredients include a young director drawn from the USC Whiz-Kids film school background that has produced such

The lovers are Lance Guest and Catherine Mary Stewart (top). That's Guest again (above right) with a decidedly alien creature (veteran actor Dan O'Herlihy under the scales). The futuristic vehicle (above left) is Centauri's "car-space ship," Centauri being Robert Preston.

as Steven Spielberg, John Carpenter and others. They also include some promising young unknowns, ala *War Games*, and Robert Preston, who prepped for his role as the trickster Centauri through years of playing friendly and deceptive types — Julie Andrews' manager/confidante in *Victor/Victoria* being the latest in a string that runs back to *The Music Man*.

"We wrote the part with Preston in mind," says producer Adelson. "We were extremely happy when he agreed to do the picture."

Lance Guest is the hero, Alex. In his very first big screen role (he had a small part in *Halloween II*), the personable newcomer gets to vaporize the forces of evil. Not a bad start. His sweetheart, Maggie, played by Catherine Mary Stewart, encourages Alex to use his talents so he can go places. But Maggie never dreams that the places will be whole star systems away from their rural trailer park. Both Guest and Stewart have a fresh, tousel-haired appeal that audiences should easily identify with. They're the ordinary people who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances, through which they learn that they're actually quite special people. Since nearly all of us believe, no matter what our surroundings, that we're secretly very special, the roles should provoke a lot of cheering.

The director is someone moviegoers have mainly seen behind a mask. Nick Castle is the son of Nick Castle, Sr., a well known film and television choreographer. An actor by age eight, performing in *Any*

(Continued on page 11)

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FIRESTARTER

BY ANTHONY DE CURTIS

'Sometimes it takes her half an hour to cry, sometimes . . ." Director Mark Lester's voice trails off hopefully. Lester is huddled with producer Frank Capra, Jr. in the forty-degree cold on the set of *Firestarter* in Wilmington, North Carolina. The subject of this confab is the adorable (the word comes instinctively at this point, as if it were her title) Drew Barrymore, who charmed the world in her starring role in *E.T. – The Extra-Terrestrial.* Lester has had nothing but good things to say about Drew, but tonight, as the production comes within a week or so of wrapping . . . well, no one wants any difficulties to arise now.

Yet Drew's initial problem drawing tears for what Lester describes as a "very emotional scene" puts her in very good company on this set. Nobody's doing much weeping over this $15 million production, which after more than two months of shooting in a location virtually virgin to filmmaking, is both within budget and within four days of the original schedule. In fact, spirits around here couldn't be higher.

Based on the best-selling novel by Stephen King (author of *Carrie, The Shining* and *The Dead Zone), Firestarter* boasts both an all-star cast and fire effects of a scope and dimension that haven't been encountered since General Sherman used the South as a site for some epic incendiary scenes during the Civil War. The script by Stanley Mann (*The Collector, Omen II*) sticks closely to King's riveting story of two college students who, to earn some extra bucks, participate in a drug-related experiment secretly funded by the sinister Department of Scientific Intelligence, a C.I.A.-like government agency referred to as "The Shop." In addition to the cash, the students, played by David Keith *(An Officer and A Gentleman)* and *Dynasty*'s Heather Locklear, pick up extra-sensory powers and some hot genes that enable Charlie (Drew Barrymore), the daughter they eventually produce, to torch at will anyone or anything that makes her angry. The Shopkeepers see young Charlie as a prime candidate for some further experiments, and their efforts to capture and eventually eliminate her and her father provide the core of *Firestarter*'s suspenseful action.

In addition to Barrymore, Keith and Locklear, *Firestarter* features three Academy Award-winners for Best Actor/Actress: George C. Scott, Art Carney and Louise Fletcher. Scott plays John Rainbird, a deranged hit-man for the Shop who yearns to achieve a kind of spiritual union with Charlie by bashing her brains in. Carney and Fletcher portray a trusting farm couple who shelter Charlie and her father, Andy, as they flee the Shop's murderous pursuit. Martin Sheen, who recently portrayed John F. Kennedy in the NBC miniseries *Kennedy,* appears as the Shop's genial administrator.

Director Mark Lester is delighted with these casting coups. "We have people that we never imagined would ever be in the movie, people like George Scott, Martin Sheen and Art Carney," he points out enthusiastically. "This became a much classier project because we had this great talent in it. The cast is beyond what I had expected when I started the film. Because it was so expensive to do the effects, we thought that we wouldn't be able to afford a large cast. But everyone was so confident in the script that they raised the budget and put more stars in."

This film's effects, however, will definitely give the stars a run for their money. Special effects for *Firestarter* were handled by Jeff Jarvis and Mike Wood, who have collaborated on such eye-stunners as *Poltergeist* and *Amityville 3D. Firestarter*'s demands presented the two with a real challenge. "Mike and myself have tried to develop some new, interesting, and different ways of burning people and burning houses down," Jarvis reports with understated cool. He is a large, broad man whose silvery gray hair and beard make him seem

Drew Barrymore (top right) has the gift and the curse of fire — one look from her, and flames envelop her unlucky victim (top left). Her parents (David Keith and Heather Locklear, above), were themselves victims of secret government experiments, and now renegade agents are after their "talented" daughter.

a combination guru and glamour-boy wrestler. "And we've come up with some things that've never been done before. Like the suit that the stunt people get into for their full body burns. We've actually cut the suit down to about one quarter the size that it normally is. When you see a full body burn in the movies, the suits are always so big and bulky, it looks like the guy is twelve times his normal size! For this film, we got it down so that the suits are approximately an eighth to a quarter of an inch thick. We've been able to achieve as much as a minute and forty seconds of burn time before we have to get the man out.

"We've also developed face masks from molds of the actors that we put over the suit, so you can look through the fire and actually see some facial characteristics. And there are a number of gels that have been invented to help protect the stunt

An All-Star Cast Brings Stephen King's *Firestarter* to Blazing Life

people, so we can burn people with a minimum amount of fire-retardant clothes on. They can do it with their open skin."

Glenn Randall, whose credits include *Star Wars*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and *E.T.*, is an intensely soft-spoken man whose mild manner and blend-into-the-woodwork looks belie a familiarity with danger that would make Mr. T shudder. He is the man who had to devise the movie's pyrotechnic stunts as well as assemble a crew capable of passing these trials of fire. "Normally setting people on fire is a stunt in itself," Randall explains. "But we've been incorporating other stunts that involve not only the actual stunt, but the fire as well. We're

George C. Scott (above left), Art Carney and Louise Fletcher (above, with Drew Barrymore), all Academy Award winners, star in* Firestarter. *Director Mark Lester (far left) and producer Frank Capra, Jr. (near left) confer on location in North Carolina.

drawing people on cables, staging high falls, catapult shots, a lot of various gags that are usually tricky enough without the additional problems of putting people in burn suits." This degree of artistic challenge is a good part of what drew Randall to *Firestarter* in the first place: "I'd just finished *Raiders II* when they contacted me for the project. I read the script and realized that we did have some huge problems. And it was a challenge. I've been in the business twenty-three years and have seen almost everything and done almost everything. I'm always looking for something new and different. The creative aspect of the business is what appeals to me at this stage of my career. We got some very unusual shots for this movie. We've been able to come up with some things that have not been put on film before. I'm well pleased."

Firestarter, opening May 11, was filmed entirely in North Carolina, with the bulk of the shooting taking place on the 258-year-old, 12,000-acre Orton Plantation. Producer Frank Capra, Jr., an unpretentious lord of the manor who wanders the set with a glad hand and easy smile — and a watchful eye — regards the spectacular Orton site, which lies on an intercoastal waterway and formerly was a rice plantation, as a real find. "We looked a long time before we found this place," he recalls. "We looked in Mexico, we looked in Rome, we looked in Texas and in and around Louisiana. When we finally found this place, which was a combination of seeing a picture of it on the cover of a magazine and tracking it down through the Film Commission of North Carolina, we came here and said, 'This is perfect for us!'"

A full-size replica of the enormous plantation house and stables was erected for the production, and a pond was dug into the grounds. On this night of shooting, the gloomy, heavily forested plantation bore brooding witness as the stables lit the night sky with torrents of flames and fire-balls hurtled hundreds of feet across the set to crash in thunderous explosion against the mansion house.

No stranger to such violent cinematic atmospheres, Mark Lester exudes an impressive calm amid the firestorm. Lester, an intense, distracted man with longish black hair swept back from his face and perpetually darting eyes, made his reputation with such action-packed extravaganzas as *Roller Boogie*, *Stunts* and *Class of 1984*, but it was the multidimensional quality of Stephen King's novel that made him decide that *Firestarter*, which was originally conceived as a vehicle for John Carpenter, was the right project for him. "I was given *Firestarter* by (executive producer) Dino De Laurentiis to read, and it was the first Stephen King book I'd read," Lester states. "And I loved it. It works on so many different levels: as a great love story, as a thriller, as suspense, as a supernatural study. That's what attracted me, the book itself."

Lester's belief in the essential power of King's story is so strong that he is not at all concerned that *Firestarter*'s eye-boggling effects will overwhelm its more emotional aspects. "It does separate in my mind, the effects portion of the film and the dramatic portion of the film," the director admits. "But without the human relationships and characters, the effects never work. We've seen so many effects in movies, and often the human story is lost. So in this I wanted to make sure that the human story is there and that people love the characters and are involved especially with the leads, Andy and Charlie. I wanted to make sure that the love story between the father and daughter was the central focus, so when the effects came they would be a plus to the whole movie."

Lester is convinced that the topical quality of *Firestarter* is also one of its great strengths. "I'm a very politically involved person myself, so that aspect of the story really interested me," he comments. "While the movie works on the entertainment level, I also kept in that social aspect that was in the book, which involves the civil liberties of people, and government agencies and their use of people for research in ways those people don't know about. All those issues that are in the book and that made it such a popular best seller, we kept those in the movie, though they're very subtly done. I think people who are looking for that will find it in the movie."

Asked what he'd like his audiences to feel as they leave the theater after seeing *Firestarter*, Lester replies, "I hope they'll leave on an upbeat note because we tried to keep it away from being a very gruesome film. I think they'll be very excited [he begins to laugh] and anxious waiting the sequel, *Firestarter II*, or maybe *Firestopper*, uh, directed by Richard Fischer!" After more than two months on location and with a final week of heavy shooting left, Mark Lester is cracking jokes. Things must be going well.

STEVEN VAUGHAN/SIPA PRESS

STREETS OF FIRE

The brooding, smoldering face of Michael Paré (above left) as hero Tom Cody, mythical creation of veteran action director Walter Hill (above).* Streets of Fire *harkens back to one of Hill's biggest hits,* The Warriors: *both films take place in their own time, neither past, present, nor future, where Western legend combines with fiery urban madness (below).

Diane Lane (opposite), who debuted as the precociously adorable young girl in* A Little Romance, *has grown up; she's a rock & roll singer, Tom Cody's former lover, whom he must rescue from a gang of leather-jacketed motorcycle bullies.

Michael Paré Stars in Walter Hill's *Streets of Fire*

BY DAVIN SEAY

An elevated train roars through the squalid city in the dead of night. From somewhere a woman's voice, hoarse and world weary, talks on, as if only to herself. "My brother's name is Tom," she says, "Tom Cody." Whiskey and coffee blunt the edge in her voice. "He was complicated. A lot more complicated than people thought. He had a lot of backbone at a time when it was kind of scarce . . ." As she speaks a lone figure hangs on the overhead straps of the subway car. He wears a long coat and a chambray shirt and at his side is a battered suitcase.

Thus Walter Hill introduces, with all the portentous significance his directorial skills can muster, the mythic lead of his latest film, *Streets of Fire*, the first in a projected film trilogy titled *The Adventures of Tom Cody*. Subsequent installments have been dubbed *The Far City* and *Cody's Return*. Cody is, from the get-go, a character considerably larger than life — a kind of Dirty Harry/Travis Bickle concoction with liberal doses of Brando and Dean added for the appropriate smolder and menace.

Streets of Fire takes Hill full circle, beyond the gritty black humor of his biggest hit *48 Hrs.*, past the queasy bloodletting of *Southern Comfort* and *Long Riders*, harking all the way back to an especially gripping modern urban nightmare called *The Warriors*, Hill's first directorial effort (he started as a screenwriter), *The Warriors* told the tale of roving, rival street gangs and speed-editing, street talk and a surfeit of spectacular violence. Billed as a "rock and roll action fantasy," *Streets of Fire* takes place in some gloomy, dirty future and revolves around the kidnapping of a rock and roll singer (played by Diane Lane of *The Outsiders* and *Rumble Fish* fame) by a gang of bizarre bikers.

"The following story takes place in the Other World," writes Hill and co-scenarist Larry Gross on the very first page of the film's script, "a far-off place where genres collide — in this case, futuristic Fantasy meets the Western, gets married and has Rock and Roll babies . . ." On that same page is a couplet from the Bruce Springsteen tune from which the movie draws its name. "I live now only with strangers," howls The Boss, "I talk only to strangers — I walk with angels that have no place — Streets of Fire . . ." No one could ever accuse Walter Hill of not knowing exactly the kind of movie he has in mind.

Hill needed a face, a personality to match his consuming vision of the ultimate action hero. The search for an actor to portray, project and embody Tom Cody stopped dead at the clean lines of Michael Paré's jaw.

"He had the right quality," Hill says. "He was the only person I found who was right for the part . . . a striking combination of toughness and innocence."

It takes some kind of toughness to endure the scorching set on the San Fernando Valley backlot where the shooting of *Streets of Fire* is in its final week. To speed up the schedule, the entire set, six blocks of carefully detailed New York City streets, complete with elevated train tracks and a full-scale movie marquee, has been roofed over with an enormous expanse of plastic tarp to allow night shooting during the day.

In the midst of this sweltering chaos

Michael Paré sits calmly smoking a Marlboro, watching Walter Hill set up yet another take of a shot they have been laboring over all afternoon. The 24-year-old actor is, incredibly, dressed in heavy suede britches and a long-sleeved woolen undershirt — Tom Cody's costume and a horrifying reminder of the price stardom sometimes exacts. Paré seems to mind neither the gruelling heat nor the hurry-up-and-wait pace on the set. He has apparently wound some internal clock to half speed, his lids at half mast over pale blue eyes, his blond hair occasionally re-ruffled by a harried make-up woman. He seems to be saving himself up, holding himself in careful reserve, forcing himself to move, talk and react with slow deliberation. The impression created is striking and a little unsettling — it's uncertain whether Michael Paré is about to explode or fall asleep.

"Walter has a vivid picture of what he wants," Paré observes, pulling the final cloud of smoke from the Marlboro and expelling it into the saturated air. "There's never a question of 'do I have what he needs.' You wouldn't be here if you didn't."

He has a point. The reason Paré is here is precisely because Hill saw in his classically chisled features and tightly self-contained presence the makings of a genuine American hero — Hill's own decidedly jaundiced version of the right stuff. Paré, even on first impressions, is uniquely qualified to fit Tom Cody's boots. He broods and flares with all the panache of a Matt Dillon or Richard Gere, resembling, albeit slightly, a considerably younger and healthier Nick Nolte with a touch of down-home Gerard Depardieu.

"Of course I'm lucky," Paré admits, while around him crew and extras slog through their jobs like penitants in hell. "I'm the luckiest guy I know." Biographical details bear out the assertion. Born in Brooklyn, eighth in a line of ten children, Michael's earliest ambition was in a field far from acting. "I went to the Culinary Institute in Hyde Park," he explains, "because that was the first real job I had after my father died and I got out of high school. It was something I could do and get at least a middle-class income. But I never considered it my life's work."

Well, maybe. If cooking was a temporary gig, Paré certainly took it seriously. He graduated from the Institute with a cooking degree and quickly landed a series of apprenticeship jobs that would in time certainly have resulted in full-fledged chefdom. At 21 he became an assistant baker at New York's trés chic Tavern on the Green. It was just about then that Opportunity knocked, or rather tapped.

"Streets of Fire is a rock & roll fable," Hill says, "in the sense that the situation and totems of the film are identical with the concerns of most rock & roll songs."

"I was waiting in a bar for my girlfriend," he recounts, "when I felt a tap on my shoulder." Beckoning him to stardom was a New York-based talent scout who eventually put the rather bewildered Paré in touch with the late legendary agent Joyce Selznick. "She helped me get acting lessons," he explains. "I quit cooking and gave myself a year to make it as an actor."

Even someone with Paré's phenomenal good luck can hardly be expected to hit the big time in 12 short months. It took two full years before he landed a supporting role in a short-lived TV series called *Greatest American Hero,* where he stayed for another year-and-a-half, leaping in a single bound over the obligatory acting hurdles of off-off-Broadway, soap operas and commercials. "It was a good experience," he allows. "I learned how to hit my mark and get to make-up and wardrobe on time."

He also, it seems, learned how to project a considerable on-camera appeal. Writer/director Martin Davidson, spotting Paré on *Greatest American Hero,* recognized the former sous-chef's natural talent at conveying all manner of alluring and dangerous undercurrents and cast him in the title role of the turgid rock and roll melodrama called *Eddie and the Cruisers.* "It was a big gamble for both of us," Paré confides. "I

really felt the pressure, but in the end, being able to get up on stage and let loose, it all fell together." Apparently it didn't fall together far enough. One of the most substantial embarrassments of the '83 film season, *Eddie and the Cruisers* perished despite a massive publicity campaign, but Paré hardly went down with the ship. Even before the movie's release he'd been cast for both *Streets of Fire* ("Saw him in *Eddie and the Cruisers,*" Hill says tersely; "Met a few times. Talked. That was enough for me.") as well as a co-starring spot in *Undercover,* an Australian effort directed by David Stevens of *A Town Like Alice* fame. "I play a New York promotion man in the 1920s who goes Down Under to sell corsets," Paré explains, while stage hands roll a fire-engine-red, chopped and channeled Mercury onto the set. "*Undercover* is a kind of Cary Grant and Doris Day screwball comedy and it was a lot of fun to make."

Hill summons him to the set. Climbing into the Merc, Paré waits for his cue, then jumps out and strides through a collection of vintage '51 bullet-nose Studebakers, decked out to look like 21st Century squad cars. He glares menacingly at the camera lens and Hill cries "cut."

One gets the impression that Paré is not as interested in keeping his private life private as many a more established and wary film star might be. What he does with his off-camera hours seems calculated to be quite normal and average. "I spend time with my wife," he says with a shrug. "Sometimes we go out with friends. Sometimes we stay at home and watch TV." Michael met Lisa, a law student who works as an assistant in the Los Angeles D.A.'s office, in New York. "She was a blind date for my brother Terrance, who writes romance novels for a living. We were married two years ago and moved out to Hollywood. When she finishes school we'll find a little place in upstate New York."

It all sounds quite, well, idyllic, but one wonders whether Paré, given his current status as a bankable property, will ever have the chance to indulge his bucolic dreams. If, as seems certain, *Streets of Fire* is another Walter Hill hit, Paré will be caught up in the destiny of Tom Cody for the foreseeable future when the film opens June 8. It's a fate that suits him well.

The two stars — Sherman's finest vintage armament (above, crushing a car and at least one brick building), and James Garner (inset left) as the Sergeant Major who restores the World War II mobile destroyer and then finds good use for it.

Where Does James Garner Drive His Tank? Anywhere He Wants To!

BY CHRIS MORRIS

James Garner is tank jockey Zack Carey in Irwin Yablans' forthcoming production *Tank*, directed by Marvin J. Chomsky from a screenplay by Dan Gordon. It's a plum role for Garner. Carey is a tough, acid-tongued professional soldier with some sturdy, old-fashioned ideas about love, duty, family and honor. He arrives at his new post, Fort Clemmons in the rural South, with his wife LaDonna (Shirley Jones) and his son Billy (C. Thomas Howell), daydreaming of his imminent retirement. His arrival at the fort attracts some immediate attention — after all, it isn't every officer who arrives on base with a completely restored tank in tow. The tank is Zack's hobby; it's been painstakingly reconditioned over the past fifteen years. Asked why anyone would want a Sherman tank, he replies, "Because the odds against accidentally shooting yourself while cleaning it are incredible."

The trouble starts for Zack Carey when he leaves the base one night and drives to neighboring Clemmonsville in search of a cold beer and a friendly alternative to the dull pleasures of the officers' club. In a Clemmonsville roadhouse, he strikes up a conversation with Sara (Jenilee Harrison), a young prostitute who works for the local vice lord, Sheriff Buelton (G.D. Spradlin). When one of the sheriff's deputies roughs up the girl, Zack retaliates by beating the deputy senseless.

Buelton then strikes back at Zack by arresting his son Billy in a trumped-up drug bust. When Billy is finally sentenced to the state prison farm, Zack decides he's had enough of Southern justice and moves his own armament into action.

Zack Carey's vengeful tank raid on the Clemmonsville jail is just the beginning of an uproarious, explosive cross-country chase which pits the crazed Sheriff Buelton and his minions against the armor-clad firepower of the Sherman tank manned by Zack, Billy and Sara.

Tank's high-spirited action is perfectly suited to the talents of James Garner. The durable and charismatic leading man, known to millions as TV's Bret Maverick and Jim Rockford, is himself no stranger to the role of military man. Some of Garner's best-remembered films, including *The Great Escape*, *Sayonara* and *The Americanization of Emily*, featured the actor as a wise-cracking American in uniform.

Shirley Jones has been one of America's most wholesome actresses since the Fifties.

"*Tank* was just a joy. It will be a great little part for me," Jenilee Harrison says of her role as the 17-year-old prostitute Sara. "The best thing for me was wearing absolutely no makeup, with my hair up on top of my head in a ponytail. They only cared about my acting, they didn't care how I looked." A welcome relief for the actress after her stint on ABC's *Three's Company* and her "surf chick" role in the TV movie, *Malibu*, where much fuss was made over appearance.

"James Garner is great, we became good friends," she says enthusiastically. "We played cards every night for three months. We played Jerry's Rules. Jerry is his chiropractor. It's a great card game."

As for the near legendary difficulty of star Garner, Harrison is clearly on Garner's side. "He takes an authoritative position many times, but that's just to protect himself. James Garner has made himself a star, nobody else has done it. He never got out of line, never dictated anybody else's job."

Tank spent those three months on location in Georgia, "in some small towns, and we worked six days a week," Ms. Harrison remembers. And how was Georgia? "A lot of red clay," she says succinctly.

When asked about her career after *Tank*, Ms. Harrison replies, "I take it day by day. I plan on being in this business my whole life."

Judith Sims

when she rose to stardom as the singing star of the film versions of Rogers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel*. She graduated from girl-next-door roles to her latter-day identification as everybody's favorite Mom via her stint in the long-running TV series *The Partridge Family*, which co-starred her real-life stepson David Cassidy. But those accustomed to the squeaky-clean Shirley Jones may be in for a shock: Screenwriter Dan Gordon has conceived the distaff Carey as a tough, sometimes tart-tongued Army wife.

C. Thomas Howell comes to his role as Billy Carey fresh from his starring debut as Ponyboy Curtis in Francis Ford Coppola's film of S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*. *Tank* is only Tommy Howell's third film (his first screen role was as one of Henry Thomas' bike-riding buddies in *E.T.*), but he's already getting a chance to display his versatility — the fast-paced action of this current project is in marked contrast to Coppola's introspective drama.

Not that Tommy Howell isn't at home with action. His dad, Chris Howell, is a well-known stunt man, and Tommy himself is quite the cowboy — he was California Junior Rodeo Association Champion in 1979.

A little family get-together — Shirley Jones (center) joins Harrison, Garner, C. Thomas Howell and the tank – for a joyous homecoming after a very tough journey.

Rounding out *Tank*'s cast are a master screen villain and a vivacious young actress. G.D. Spradlin is a superb and well-traveled screen heavy. If a part demands a menacing Southern or Southwestern type, Spradlin is the man for the job. The square-jawed, steely-eyed actor is well-known to connoisseurs of movie evil as the hard-nosed coaches in *North Dallas Forty* and *One on One*, the corrupt Nevada senator in *The Godfather Part II*, and the grim general who dispatches Marlon Brando's assassin in *Apocalypse Now*.

Tank marks the screen debut of Jenilee Harrison, but she should be no stranger to fans of the long-running TV comedy *Three's Company*. The blonde, curvaceous actress was prominently featured on the show as the bubble-headed roommate of John Ritter and Joyce DeWitt.

Tank's solid cast is put through their sometimes exhausting paces by Marvin Chomsky, a veteran director whose credits include some of the most noteworthy TV films of recent years: *Holocaust*, *Roots* and *Inside the Third Reich* (for which he won the prestigious Director's Guild Award for best director).

The Georgia locations serve as a colorful backdrop for a brightly variegated story. *Tank*, opening March 16, offers audiences intimate family drama, raucous comedy, and, most of all, full-tilt action, much of it supplied by its eponymous centerpiece. As Zack Carey's Sherman slogs toward the state line at the climax of the film, crowds of onlookers roar — a response that's sure to be duplicated in movie houses around the country.

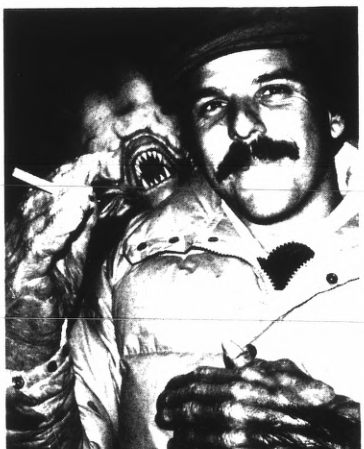
THE LAST STARFIGHTER

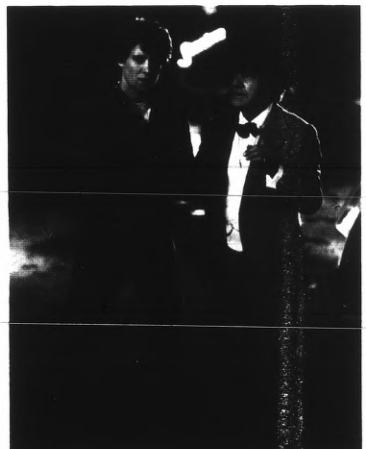
(Continued from page 4)

thing Goes, the younger Castle was a film school buddy of John Carpenter. They saw *The Resurrection of Bronco Billy*, a project on which they combined talents, win an Oscar in the "short subject" division. Castle later assisted Carpenter with the ahead-of-its-time science fiction movie *Dark Star* and, also with Carpenter, co-wrote the Kurt Russell-starring *Escape from New York*. The masked role? Castle was seen (and yet not seen) as the psycho killer in *Halloween*.

The in-kitchen mysteries connected to the preparation of *The Last Starfighter* concern, and I quote the only material available to the press at present, ". . . a facility that can fully utilize the most powerful graphic software ever written, for the most powerful computer that has ever been built, combined with an extremely high level of man-machine interaction."

Digital Productions, an independent company headed by John Whitney, Jr. and Gary Demos, has been tabbed to make the battles among the stars come alive. Until now, computer-aided images have been little snippets here and there — the rugged bolts that spin down on a Chevy truck emblem, to cite one often-seen example. Rather frequently, computer-generated images have been part of a live action scene, a minor overlay intended to create a short-lived "How did they do *that*?" impression. For the first time, whole blocks of movie time are going to be high-resolution computer graphics, thanks to what's called the Digital Computer Scene Simulation Process. What appears on the screen will have come directly from the mind of the programmer/artist, with the substantial aid of a $6.5 million CRAY 1S/1000 computer. Compared to the secrecy surrounding their work at Digital Productions, Demos and Whitney make the people in charge of Russia's missile programs seem like compulsive blabbermouths. At this point only two things are conclusively known outside the inner circle of *The Last Starfighter*'s makers: The costumes for the aliens are the weird and whimsical creations of a master costume designer named Robert Fletcher and the space battle sequences are going to be a step beyond anything ever done before. It could be a festive *The Last Starfighter* opens June 22.





Robert Preston (above, with Lance Guest) plays an intergalactic con man — a sort of Music Man in Outer Space. The film's producer, Gary Adelson (above left), is proud of his movie's technical achievements in special effects — which have remained top secret.

Sixteen Candles

Teenage Agony and Ecstacy, From the Writer of National Lampoon's *Vacation*

BY MIKE BYGRAVE

What's the worst thing that can happen to a teenager? According to Molly Ringwald, having the whole family forget your sixteenth birthday may not be the worst, but it comes close. That just happens to be the plot of Ringwald's new film, *Sixteen Candles*, opening May 11, and a subject close to her heart in real life. Her own sixteenth birthday is in February, 1984.

"Sixteen is so major. Expecially if you live in Southern California, like I do, where you really can't go anywhere without driving. Turning sixteen and getting your driver's license is really like getting your freedom."

No one is likely to forget Ringwald's birthday. Indeed, some months prior to the event, negotiations were under way as to what kind of car she would receive as her present. "I want a Rabbit but my parents want me to get a BMW. I don't want a BMW because it'll look like I'm driving my parents' car. A Rabbit is so cute — a white Rabbit convertible."

Ringwald has earned her car. She's been performing since she was 4, singing with her father's Great Pacific Jazz Band. She played one of the orphans in the West Coast production of *Annie* and later became a regular on TV's *Facts of Life*. But it was her role as John Cassavetes' daughter in Paul Mazursky's *The Tempest* which put her career into overdrive. Since then, she's made a couple of TV movies and the sci-fi epic *Spacehunter: Adventure in the Forbidden Zone*. *Sixteen Candles* is one of two films about teenagers in Chicago being made back-to-back by writer-director John Hughes, both starring Ringwald.

"John says he basically writes about teenagers because he finds them more interesting than adults, and I think that's great," Ringwald says. "*Sixteen Candles* will remind people what it's like to be a teenager again. When I read the script I thought, 'yes, this is exactly how it is to be 16.'"

Although she's been working most of her young life, Ringwald is the opposite of a "stage kid." She's fresh, unspoiled and, according to the highly regarded character actor Paul Dooley, who plays her father in *Sixteen Candles*, "a typical teenager off the set. But when she acts, she's charming and interesting to look at on film. You get the camera in close and there are ever-changing, subtle expressions going on underneath the surface. She has a face on which emotions play. Meryl Streep has that kind of face, where you see three or four emotions going on as she says one sentence, and Molly has it too. There's more to her acting than just the words."

Ringwald acknowledges her life has been extraordinary, but says she never missed "having a normal childhood. I think I've gained much more than I've missed. I haven't had to waste half my life figuring out what I want to do. I've been able to do something sooner than most people and, if I don't want to keep doing it forever, at least I've had the choice and I know what it's like."

Her film work has introduced her to other things besides acting. For *Tempest* she spent two months in Greece and a month in Rome ("the first time I'd ever been abroad"). Working in Canada and meeting French-Canadians on *Spacehunter* led to her current interest in studying French. "I'm going to a French school now and I hope to learn enough so that, when it's time for me to think about college, I could go to a college in Paris."

Ringwald credits the support of her family with helping her to keep a perspective

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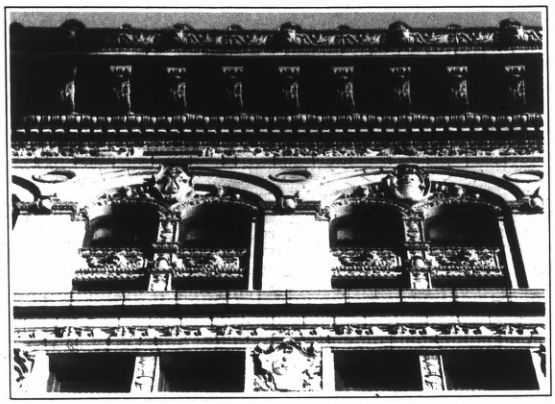
***It's Molly Ringwald's sixteenth birthday, but she has to spend it as a member of her sister's wedding party (above). Michael Schoeffler (top left and left, with Molly and writer/director John Hughes) helps her celebrate more romantically. Paul Dooley (opposite, above) is her harried father — if he looks familiar, it's because he played Dennis Christopher's harried father in* Breaking Away.**

For detail.



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Sixteen Candles

(Continued from page 12)

on her success. One teenage trait she doesn't have is rebellion. "I'm really close to my whole family. Show business can be really superficial and people are always telling me things. I wouldn't be able to deal with that without the family. If I didn't have my parents to keep me down to earth, I don't know what I'd do."

Because of Molly's age, her mother usually accompanies her to locations. Though Ringwald herself decides what projects to accept, the family is involved in her decisions and there is an absolute prohibition on "taking off my clothes in a role. I wouldn't want to anyway. I know a lot of people just consider it work, but I'm not at the stage where I could take it in my stride."

Ringwald, whose own movie idols are the Jack Nicholsons and the Warren Beattys rather than any of her contemporaries, is honest about her films. She expressed dissatisfaction with *Spacehunter* and says in general "some of the films I've done I think could have been better. But they're all experience and that's what I need." She has no doubt about *Sixteen Candles*, though. "I guess you'd call it a teenage movie, but in a sense it's not. It doesn't make the adults in the film look like idiots or completely take the side of the kids. It keeps a good balance."

Ringwald is already working on the second John Hughes film, *Breakfast Club*, about "five teenagers in high school detention who are all total opposites. They hate each other at the beginning of the day and they're best friends by the end." As well as Ringwald, *Breakfast Club* will feature two other rising young stars, Ally Sheedy (from *War Games* and *Bad Boys*) and Emilio Estevez, Martin Sheen's son (soon to be seen in *Repo Man*).

An avowed New Wave music buff, when she's not acting Ringwald can be found at rock clubs and concerts. In her own singing, she sticks to jazz: She still sings every Sunday at a San Fernando Valley hangout with her father's band, "mainly Billie Holiday and Bessie Smith numbers." Ringwald says she knows few people in the film business "though Emilio (Estevez) has been taking me to meet people like Tom Cruise for the first time." Her boyfriends tend to come from school "partly because my parents won't let me date anyone over 19." For the next couple of years the money she makes will continue to go into a trust fund, to be released when she's 18, and her plans for it are a nice mixture of the practical and the fanciful. "I'll use it to go to college, buy a house, and maybe buy a plane — or a boat." It's too far off for her to worry about. First comes that unforgettable sixteenth birthday and, just to make sure no one can forget it, Ringwald asked for a video camera for Christmas so she can film the whole event.

COMING SOON

Arnold Schwarzenegger, his pectorals and his sneer as they will appear in Conan, King of Thieves, Part II.

Conan, King of Thieves, Part II is in full battle dress down in Mexico, clanging and sweating and, well, battling. Only two stars return from the first *Conan* — Arnold Schwarzenegger (with his costarring muscles), and Mako, who plays the wizened wizard narrator. New faces include bizarrely unique singer Grace Jones, who plays Zula, a warrior. Ms. Jones has already laid several stuntmen low with her enthusiastic and all-too-realistic whamming, thumping and poleaxing. Another warrior is former basketball star Wilt Chamberlain, who plays Bombaata, guardian of a young woman Conan is sent to fetch. Like the first, *Conan II* involves a quest, thieves and other lowlife, and supernatural elements, full of crypts and labyrinths, forests and deserts and grungy folk, all directed by Richard Fleischer from a script by Stanley Mann (who also wrote *Firestarter*, detailed elsewhere in this issue). *Conan* and *Crime* are operating side by side in Mexico, and there are at least three major overlaps — producers Raffaella De Laurentiis, publicist Anne Strick . . . and Carlo Rambaldi, who created giant wormds and the Guild Navigator for *Dune* (and *E.T.* himself in past credits). Mr. Rambaldi has constructed for *Conan II* a god that metamorphoses into a winged, clawed, nasty beast.

A handsome remake of a venerable American film looms in the distance. *Brewster's Millions*, which has enjoyed six previous versions (the first in 1914, the last in 1961), will be remade this year by director Walter Hill and producer Joel Silver (who collaborated on *48 HRS.* and *Streets of Fire*). For those unfamiliar with *Brewster's* long history, it is the tale of a young man who, in order to inherit a vast fortune, must give away or throw away $30 million in 30 days. (In the earlier versions, the sum was $1 million; the new edition has been adjusted for a few decades' inflation.) The film, scripted by Timothy Harris and Herschel Weingrod, will be shot on location in San Francisco for eventual release around Christmas 1984. And who will play Brewster this time? Maybe Bill Murray, maybe not.

All of Me is definitely not a remake, but the theme may sound familiar to fantasy addicts. Lily Tomlin plays the richest woman in the world who knows she's about to die. Unwilling to just leave in peace, she arranges to have her soul transferred to the body of gorgeous Victoria Tennant *(Winds of War)*, daughter of a stablehand, but there's a hitch in the switch and Lily ends up inside attorney Steve Martin. Carl Reiner directs Phil Robinson's screenplay.

Brazil, which title has nothing much to do with that country, sounds like *1984* as seen through Monty Python — since Python animator/director Terry Gilliam is director and cowriter (with famous playwright Tom Stoppard and Charles McKeown). *Brazil*, we're told, is a twisted look at paternal governments, red tape, and assorted other nightmares, and it stars Jonathan Pryce and Kim Greist as two innocents abroad in this plot, which also includes Robert De Niro, Monty Python's Michael Palin, Katherine Helmond *(Soap)* and Ian Holm (the latter two appeared in *Time Bandits* as the ogre's wife and Napoleon, respectively). The comic fantasy, filming in England, is produced by Arnon Milchan . . . who is also producing *Legend*, an "epic romance in primeval time," peopled (and animaled) with dragons, fairies, elves, unicorns and sorcerers. The screenplay by William Hjortsberg will be directed by Ridley Scott *(Alien, Blade Runner)*. ***Judith Sims***

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